8: Mercier E-5 (ca. 1955) 1960 MS37 Senegal MS37

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Political Life in the Urban Centers of Senegal: A Study of a Period of Transition

Senegal and Sudan presently comprise the Mali Federation, which is in the process of achieving sovereignty within the French Community. Senegal itself is one of the most urbanized West African regions, and its cities have been characterized by a gradual growth of modern political life. The author presents some major findings on its urban political activity, based on extensive interviews made in the mid-1950's. The oldest urban elite, almost entirely assimilated into the French way of life, has been only partially successful in developing party organizations that satisfy the interests of the newer urban residents. As a consequence, the most active and radical post-war political activity has been centered in "non-political" bodies, notably labor unions. Also, urban political activity has been increasingly challenged by rural political developments, which have drawn their framework from urban politics. African specialists will note that Senegalese political development has much in common with such development elsewhere in Africa; it also has a number of distinctive features.

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